

Appl. No. 10/714,334
Amendment to Office Action of 3.11.2004

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraphs starting with the second paragraph on page 14 through to the last paragraph on page 16 (which extends on to page 17) with the following paragraphs:

Figure 11 illustrates a third preferred embodiment pillow. Generally, the third preferred embodiment uses similar materials as the first and second preferred embodiments. The foam pad 105 is substantially similar to the foam pad of either the first or second preferred embodiments. The primary difference between this embodiment and the proceeding embodiments is the construction of its pillow covering 195. Unlike the covering 110, the pillow covering 255 of the third preferred embodiment is not substantially longer than the associated foam pad 105. Rather, the length of the cover in the third embodiment is typically longer than the pad only by a sufficient amount to substantially cover the foam pad, although in variations the length of the covering could be longer.

The most noticeable distinction between the first and third preferred embodiment pillow coverings is that the pillow covering of the third preferred embodiment includes one or two flaps 200 & 205 that extend laterally from the foam pad. Typically, these flaps are sewn to the primary body of the pillow covering at seams 210. The flaps may also include one or more strips of hook and loop material 215 & 220 attached to thereto. In alternative variations a strip of hook and loop material can also be attached to the primary body of the pillow covering as applicable to receive a strip attached to a flap. The purpose of the flaps is essentially similar to the extended portion of the first preferred embodiment's pillow covering, which is to hold or secure the pillow into a particular folded configuration.

Operationally referring to Figure 11, a user begins folding the third preferred embodiment pillow from the widthwise end opposite the end adjacent the one or more flaps. Once folded into the desired configuration, the user folds the first flap 200 under the folded pillow, and next, the user folds the second flap 205 underneath the first flap. Finally, the user secures the flaps in place by aligning and coupling the corresponding strips of hook and loop material 215 & 220 on each respective flap.

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A Fourth Preferred Embodiment of The Pillow

Figure 12 illustrates a fourth preferred embodiment pillow. Generally, the fourth preferred embodiment uses similar materials as the first, second and third preferred embodiments. For instance, the foam pad 105 is substantially similar to the foam pad of either the first or second preferred embodiments. Like the third preferred embodiment, the primary difference between this embodiment and the first and third preferred embodiments is the construction of its pillow covering 225. The primary body of the covering is generally similar to that of the third preferred embodiment in that it is typically about the same length or slightly longer than the foam pad contained within it. However, near the widthwise end opening 235 in which the foam pad is slid into the covering, the bottom side of the covering includes a pouch 230 sewn or otherwise attached thereto. The pouch typically includes an opening along a longitudinal edge of the covering. Corresponding hook and loop material strips 240 & 245 are typically provided so that the pouch can be closed. The pouch is adapted to hold folded pillowcases 250 of various sizes.

Operationally referring to Figure 12, a user begins by removing a pillowcase 250 from the pouch 230 corresponding to the size of the pillow once it has been folded. Next, a user begins folding the fourth preferred embodiment pillow from the widthwise end opposite the end opening 235. Finally, the user places the sized pillowcase 250 over the folded pillow in a traditional manner. The pillowcase effectively holds the pillow in its folded configuration.

A Fifth Preferred Embodiment of The Pillow

Figures 13 and 14 illustrate a fifth preferred embodiment pillow. The foam pad 105 of this embodiment is typically several inches shorter than the foam pads of the other embodiments described above. The pillow covering 255 of the fifth preferred embodiment can also extend beyond one widthwise end of the pad 105 such that the extended portion can be tucked under the pillow once the pillow has been folded to hold the folded pillow in place. Other variations may include the pouch and pillowcases of the fourth preferred embodiment or the flaps of the third preferred embodiment.

Adjacent the end of the foam pad opposite the pillow covering's opening, the covering extends therefrom for several inches (typically 6-18") and includes widthwise seams 265 sewn at

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intervals of about 2-6" to form one or more pockets 270. Foam blocks 260 of essentially the same width as the foam pad 105 are received into the pockets. This configuration is especially suited to forming the pillow into the neck pillow configurations shown in Figures 10D & 10E. It is noted that because the foam portions of the pillow 105 & 260 are widthwise segmented at one end of the pillow, the pillow will have less a tendency to spring back or unfold than a neck pillow comprised of a single foam pad, such as the first preferred embodiment.

Operationally, a user begins folding the pillow at the end that includes the foam blocks. The pillow is folded at each seam 265 to in effect form the raised or thicker portion of the neck pillow. Next, the remaining longitudinal length of the pillow is folded in thirds to form a resulting pillow similar to the one illustrated in Figure 14. Finally, the extended portion 145 of the pillow covering 255 is tucked under the bottom of the folded pillow to help hold the pillow in the desired configuration.

A Sixth Preferred Embodiment of The Pillow

Figures 15 and 16 illustrate a sixth preferred embodiment pillow. Like the fifth preferred embodiment, the sixth preferred embodiment utilizes a number of foam blocks 260 in combination with a shortened foam pad 105 (at least when compared to the foam pad of the first preferred embodiment). However, the foam blocks 260 are each contained in individual block coverings 280 instead of being placed into individual compartments at the end of a covering. Each of the block covers have hook and loop material strips extending widthwise relative to the length of the pad 105 and the pad covering 290. The covering 290 also includes one or more strips of widthwise strips of hook and loop material 285 proximate its closed end. Accordingly, one, two or more blocks contained in their respective foam block coverings can be stacked on top of each other to augment the thickness of the neck portion of a neck pillow. In variations, it is appreciated that the pillow covering 290 and the block coverings 280 can also be configured such that the blocks could be placed side by side, as well as, stacked on top of each other. It is to be appreciated that the sixth preferred embodiment has essentially the same advantages as the fifth preferred embodiment in terms of the tendency or reduced tendency of the pillow to unfold when compared to the first preferred embodiment. Either of these embodiments can be especially desirable when the foam material used in the pillow is not memory foam but a more resilient closed cell foam.

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Please replace the fourth paragraph on page 17 with the following paragraph:

Figure 17 illustrates the foam pad 295 of a seventh preferred embodiment pillow. The pillow covering has been omitted for clarity but the pillow covering of the first and third preferred embodiments can be utilized with the pad of this embodiment. The pad 295 includes a molded or otherwise formed bulge 300 at one end of the foam pad. The bulge is preferably at least partially cylindrical and when the pillow is folded it provides for the additional thickness of the thicker neck section. In an alternative embodiment somewhat related to the seventh preferred embodiment a separate cylindrical piece of foam can be used in conjunction with a foam pad, such as the pad 105 of the first preferred embodiment, to create the thicker neck section of the resulting folded neck pillow.

Please replace the last paragraph on page 18 with the following amended paragraph:

The embodiments of the [water toy] pillow as illustrated in the accompanying figures and described above are merely exemplary and are not meant to limit the scope of the invention. It is to be appreciated that numerous variations to the invention have been contemplated as would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure. All variations of the invention that read upon the appended claims are intended and contemplated to be within the scope of the invention.